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-- REMARKS --

The present amendment replies to a Non-Final Office Action dated July 26, 2004. Claims 1-25 are currently pending in the present application. The Applicants thank the Examiner for the allowance of claims 1-16.

In the Non-Final Office Action, Examiner Kang rejected pending claims 17-25 on various grounds. The Applicants respond to each ground of rejection as subsequently recited herein, and respectfully request reconsideration and further examination of the present application under 37 CFR § 1.112:

- A.** Claims 17-25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement

The rejections of claims 17 – 25 under 35 U.S.C. §112 are respectfully traversed. Claim 17 has been amended to more clearly inferentially refer to the activation plate by deleting “comprising the bond pad metal. Claim 17 now clearly indicates that the activation plate (as shown, for example, in FIG. 3, number 340) is positioned adjacent the integrated circuit and is not claimed as an element of the integrated circuit. The withdrawal of rejection of claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. §112 is respectfully requested.

Claims 18-25 were rejected for depending off of rejected independent claim 17. Claim 17 has been amended as stated above. Therefore the withdrawal of the rejections of claims 18-25 under 35 U.S.C. §112 is respectfully requested.

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- B. Claims 17-23 and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by Ling et al (US 2002/0096765)

The rejection of claims 17-23 and 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by Ling et al is respectfully traversed. As the Examiner has recognized, Ling et al does not teach positioning an activation plate adjacent to the integrated circuit when the electroless nickel is plated to the bond pads and when gold is plated to the nickel-plated bond pads. Withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) rejection of claim 17 is respectfully requested.

Claims 18-23 and 25 depend directly or indirectly from independent claims 17. Therefore, dependent claims 18-23 and 25 include all of the elements and limitations of independent claim 17. It is therefore respectfully submitted by the Applicants that dependent claims 18-23 and 25 are allowable over Ling et al. for at least the same reasons as set forth above with respect to independent claim 17. Withdrawal of the rejection of dependent claims 18-23 and 25 under 35 U.S.C § 102(a) is requested.

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- C. Claims 17 and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Takase et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,028,011)

The rejection of claims 17 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Takase et al is respectfully traversed. As the Examiner has recognized, Takase et al does not teach positioning an activation plate adjacent to the integrated circuit when the electroless nickel is plated to the bond pads and when gold is plated to the nickel-plated bond pads. Withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) rejection of claim 17 is respectfully requested.

Claim 24 depends from independent claims 17. Therefore, dependent claim 24 includes all of the elements and limitations of independent claim 17. It is therefore respectfully submitted by the Applicants that dependent claim 24 is allowable over Takase et al. for at least the same reasons as set forth above with respect to independent claim 17. Withdrawal of the rejection of dependent claim 24 under 35 U.S.C § 102(b) is requested.

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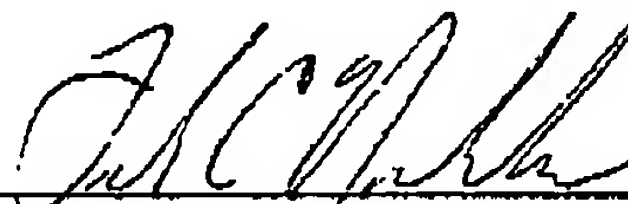
SUMMARY

The Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-25 fully satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 102, 103 and 112 and are in a condition for allowance. In view of the foregoing remarks, favorable consideration and passage to issue of the present application are respectfully requested.

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Respectfully submitted,
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